

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated April 21, 2004. Claims 2, 3, 5, 11, 12, 14, 55, 57 and 67 are in the application of which Claims 55, 57 and 67 are independent. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter in Claims 77 to 79. Based on that indication, and the Examiner's explanation of his reasons for allowance, the substance of those claims has been incorporated into independent Claims 55, 57 and 67, respectively. It is believed that those claims and the claims dependent therefrom are now in condition for allowance.

Claims 55, 3, 5, 12, 14, 57 and 67 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over U.S. Patent 5,740,368 (Villalpando); Claims 2 and 11 were rejected under § 103(a) over Villalpando in view of Claims 55 and 57, in combination of U.S. Patent 5,791,790 (Bender); and Claims 7, 9, 16, 18, 56, 58 and 68 were rejected under § 103(a) over Villalpando in view of Bender. Without conceding the correctness of these rejections, Applicants have taken the above actions in an effort to advance this case to an earlier allowance. These actions have been taken without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter, and should be viewed as a traversal of the rejections.

Regarding a formal matter, it is requested for the Examiner to indicate his consideration of the art cited in the Information Disclosure Statement dated December 19, 2003 by returning an initialled form PTO-1449. This is a second request.

No other matters being raised, it is believed that the entire application is in condition for allowance, and such action is courteously solicited.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California, office by telephone at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,


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